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Guide to Old Economy.



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A Guide to Old Economy

By Daniel B Reibel



Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

A Guide to Old Economy

By
Daniel B Reibel

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL
AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
Harrisburg, 1972

THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

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Foreword

THIS booklet was written to answer the need for a short history of the Harmony Society and for a guide to Old Economy. It is not intended to be complete by any means—that requires a larger work, which has been published in two volumes by Karl J. R. Arndt, *George Rapp's Harmony Society, 1785-1847* (1965, 1971) and *George Rapp's Successors and Material Heirs* (1971).

This is the fifth edition. The first was written in 1965 before I had even arrived at Old Economy. The others were expansions and corrections of the first. This edition is the most accurate (I hope!) of them all. The first three versions were written primarily for internal circulation among our staff and volunteers. This edition is meant primarily to inform the general public as well as to give information to guides and volunteers of the Museum. I wish to express my appreciation to the Store Committee of the Harmonie Associates for making the fourth (and largest) edition possible and to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for printing this one. I wish to thank Mr. Harold L. Myers, Associate Historian, for editing the manuscript and guiding this booklet through the press and Mr. Earl Liebermann for designing and drawing the original cover; and I wish to thank all the people who read our earlier versions and kindly corrected me when I was in error. I hope the present reader will be as patient with me.

If it is not presumptuous of me to dedicate this to someone I would like to dedicate it to Frederick Rapp, who, as architect of this village, had the vision to adapt the needs of architecture to the needs of his brethren, and left us a lasting monument.

DANIEL B REIBEL

Old Economy
February 1, 1972

The cover view, ca. 1892, looks toward the Feast Hall from the Baker House, with the Store and the Tailor's Shop between. The man is John Duss, last senior trustee.



Father George Rapp, the Founder

A Tour of Old Economy

Hail! Tranquil spectator from the true point of view, who . . . can discover the outline and building plan of wisdom, where a united brother people is the mansion of God, a divine tabernacle, full of wisdom and strength!*

The “united brother people” was the Harmony Society and the “mansion of God” was the town of Economy, now Ambridge. The Harmonists came to this country seeking religious freedom and in their travels in this world built two other communities. Economy was the third. The Harmony Society is gone now, but the core of the little village still nestles in the valley.

This *Guide* is divided in two parts: The first is a history of the Harmony Society; the second is a guide to the village of Old Economy. You really should understand the first in order to understand the second.

THE HARMONY SOCIETY—PIETISM

Revolutions begin sometimes with a very conservative goal—the revival of the lost ideals of a former time. Once a revolution is started it is hard to stop, however, and its results may be far more radical than originally intended. Such was the case with the Protestant Reformation. The Protestants intended to restore a “purer” Christianity. From reading the Bible they knew something of the first Christians and believed they were going back to the beliefs of early Christianity. The Protestants altered the existing relationship of man to his church, changed the number and nature of the sacraments, changed the priest into a minister, revised the concept of grace, made the Bible the fundamental document, and then attempted to stop at the point where they believed they had re-created a “pure” Christianity.

However, many people thought they had stopped too soon, and, like a revolution, the Reformation continued among certain groups. The pietists were among these. The pietists not only changed the fundamental relationship between man and his church, they did away with the church completely. Man had to experience God directly. If he did this he did not need a church, a minister, baptism, tithes, canons, a deacon, organ, school, and all the paraphernalia needed by “worldly” people.

* [George Rapp, *et al.*], *Thoughts on the Destiny of Man, particularly with Reference to the present times.* (Harmony, Indiana, 1824), p. 15.

Therefore, pietistic societies tended to be loosely organized bodies of like-thinking people. They usually believed that the millennium, to follow Christ's second coming, was near and that they had to prepare for it. To avoid contamination by the "world" they often formed their own communities. They were often celibate and communistic; they were almost always pacifist. Although Christians, they leaned heavily for inspiration on the Old Testament. Because of their highly individual character it is hard to generalize about them. Their heyday was in the seventeenth century. The Moravians, the Amish, the Amana Society, the Society of Friends (Quakers), and many others based themselves on these religious ideas. This was not a uniquely Protestant movement. There was a Roman Catholic Reformation (the Counter Reformation) and a Jewish and a Catholic pietism. The pietist movement declined in the early part of the eighteenth century but revived toward its end.

THE FOUNDING OF THE HARMONY SOCIETY

George Rapp was born in 1757 in the little town of Iptingen in Württemberg. This area in southern Germany had been swept by the pietistic fervor of the preceding century, but was now a staidly orthodox Lutheran duchy. Toleration of a sort was practiced, as Catholic and Reform congregations were allowed to exist. Here Rapp grew up, working as a vine dresser in the summer and a weaver in the winter. He had the reputation of being a religious person. At the age of twenty-eight (1785) he either had a religious experience or declared himself openly, and publicly quit the church.

He held meetings in his home and quickly built up a band of followers. At one time he declared that he had 2,000, which is probably a fair estimate. They had a few minor problems with the state church, but since they were otherwise useful citizens and paid their taxes they were not troubled by the secular authorities. Followers of Rapp did such things as refusing to send their children to the church school, pay tithes, and go to church; and in 1787 he was called before a church council. Nothing much came of this investigation and later ones, but shortly after this Rapp formed the idea of emigration. After several false starts he came to the United States in 1803.

RAPP'S BELIEFS

It is difficult for us to define just what George Rapp really thought. Certainly his followers knew what he thought and believed in him, and the force of Rapp's ideas held his organization together long after his death. This is a great testimonial to his wisdom.

Basically his beliefs were those of the pietists. He believed that the church was too worldly and that man had to communicate directly with God. Once one had made an inner commitment to God, one did not need such things as baptism. He believed that the millennium was coming very shortly and that he was a prophet destined¹ to lead an elect group into heaven. He believed that strife of any kind was evil and that perfect harmony among men was almost a prerequisite for the millennium. He, therefore, was a pacifist. Worldly goods caused differences among men and disharmony; therefore, one should share one's property. Later this was to take a form of Christian communism. Finally, the fundamental document was the Bible. One could read only that and know enough. He and his followers placed such emphasis on the approaching millennium that they came close to making the New Testament Book of Revelation a separate Testament.

These beliefs were refined and developed in the United States. Basically, Rapp adhered to the doctrine of the Lutheran church, although he did remove most of its practices.

HARMONY: THE FIRST TERRESTRIAL HOME

Rapp spent a great deal of time in 1803 and 1804 looking for a site for his community. He looked the length of Pennsylvania and in Ohio and Virginia. A number of his followers arrived on July 4, 1804, and had to be housed in the Philadelphia area. This was not good for the group, as some broke away from it and settled in eastern Pennsylvania. It must have given Rapp a great deal of relief to find a large area of land in Butler County, which he purchased from Dettmar Basse-Mueller for approximately \$10,000. This sum was perhaps half the group's total assets.

Rapp's followers began immediately to construct a town, which they called "Harmony," named perhaps for the spirit of brotherly love they hoped to achieve there. It was a planned community with a grid arrangement of streets. The houses were, at first, log houses set on the backs of lots to allow room for the more permanent buildings. In the center of the town was a square with the more important buildings around it: the hotel, George Rapp's house, several warehouses, the church, and several houses of important people. Around the little village were the fields. The Society eventually owned 9,000 acres here.

Early in 1805 the members of the community decided to formalize their loose relationship with one another. This was necessary more for legal than for spiritual reasons. On February 15 those present

signed articles of agreement. These articles of "George Rapp and Associates (or Society)" required several things. Principally, they required that each give all his property to the common fund. The articles provided for people leaving the Society, but the major consideration was for those who stayed. The Society agreed to educate members and to provide for them in sickness and old age. The members agreed to place themselves under the authority of the Society and to work for it. Since they did not believe in sacraments, the signing of this document was the closest thing to baptism they had. Once one had made an inner commitment to God there was nothing man could do for one—so baptism was unnecessary. Signing the Articles of Agreement was a legal act which made one the fellow of a brotherhood. There were to be nine articles of agreement over the next hundred years, but this was always the most important one.

In 1807 the Society adopted the rule of celibacy. There were several explanations given for this. Rapp said several times that he was opposed to it, not because it was wrong but because it was too difficult for the members to abide by. Celibacy was a common practice among these societies on religious grounds. In a community such as Harmony it was probably a good thing for sociological reasons. The community became the parent. You may ask, did they not think of the future? They did—they expected this world to end very shortly and felt they would not need children, wealth, or anything else which would interfere with their hopes of heaven. Celibacy never became a tenet, although almost everyone was expected to practice it. As the Society grew older its position on celibacy hardened. After 1833-34 it was for all practical purposes mandatory.

At first farming was the major occupation of the community, which was like a little German farming community—self-sufficient. As in the villages they knew in Germany, their homes clustered around the village square and from them they went to their fields each day to work. The many skills they had brought from Germany were in great demand on the frontier and their community became a manufacturing center. The first items of manufacture were such things as shoes, hats, harness, barrels, and farm implements.

The Germans had left Europe partly to escape the Napoleonic Wars. Now the United States became involved in war. This worked to the advantage of the Harmonists. Between 1807 and 1809 Congress passed several embargoes on shipping and finally the Non-Intercourse Act (1809), effectively cutting off United States trade with Europe. This helped to create a domestic cloth industry in the United States. In

1809 the Harmony Society purchased some merino sheep, which were among the first purebred sheep introduced into the United States. As there was little domestic manufacturing to buy its wool, the Society began making its own cloth. Within a few years the Society had a carding mill, a fulling mill, a large weaving establishment, and a wide sale of cloth. By 1814 its *profit* from the sale of cloth equaled its *total* sales of 1809. These people were no longer farmers but manufacturers. They did not completely give up agriculture until 1824, however.

As pacifists, they did not serve in the War of 1812, which caused some ill feeling in the area. However, this had nothing to do with their sudden decision to move from Pennsylvania. Many reasons have been given for their moving when they were so well off. It was said that their grapes would not grow well; but they probably moved because Harmony was too far from good transportation and they were not able to buy more land cheaply. However, their decision to move was a sudden one and they purchased land in Indiana in 1814.

HARMONY, INDIANA: THE SECOND TERRESTRIAL HOME

Rapp and a small party went before, as he had done when coming from Germany. In the spring of 1814 they found a large block of land on the Wabash not far from its mouth. Eventually they owned about 20,000 acres. As soon as the land was purchased they sent a crew to Indiana Territory to start building the new community. They were now experienced town builders and liked the arrangement they had in the first Harmony. The town was laid out on a grid arrangement, with the principal buildings around the square. The houses surrounded this square and they, again, were built on the backs of the lots, allowing room for more permanent buildings later. On the edges of the town were the factories, and surrounding all were the fields and orchards. Because there was little fall in the river they had to use a steam engine to operate their cloth mill. This was one of the first steam engines in Indiana.

Their town of Harmony, Pennsylvania, had been offered for sale almost as early as the decision to move had been made. As the actual time to move approached they still had not found a buyer, but at the last minute one was found. He was Abraham Ziegler, who wished to found a Mennonite community. The Society sold him Harmony for \$100,000, a good return on the original investment of about \$20,000. However, the Society was now rich enough so that it did not need to sell its first community to buy its second. Ziegler was to have a long

and friendly relationship with the Society, although he was very late in paying the Society its money.

The Harmonists moved to their new home in 1815 and quickly established themselves in Indiana. Frederick Rapp (1775-1834), the number two man in the Society and George Rapp's adopted son, was elected to the Territorial Legislature and helped write the new state's constitution (1816). He also served on the committee which selected and laid out the site of Indianapolis. The community quickly became an asset to its new home. In 1818 it had a large accession of members. Except for a few individuals this was the last addition to the Society.

In 1821 they made the sudden decision to move again and offered their community for sale.

ECONOMY: THE THIRD TERRESTRIAL HOME

An agent of the Society, David Shields, had found a large tract of land for it on the Ohio. An advance party was sent, arriving in May, 1824, and it began to lay out the new town. The Society had purchased only about 3,000 acres, so it evidently had given up the idea of large-scale farming. The town had a grid arrangement of streets with the houses around the center. Instead of a town square there was a formal garden surrounded by the principal buildings. The factories and farm buildings were on the outskirts, and surrounding all were the fields. Again the temporary buildings were placed on the corners of the lots to allow room for the more permanent ones to be built later. *Ekonomie* was the pietistic name for the type of communal rule they practiced; therefore, it was logical for the Harmony Society to pick such a name for its third home.

Harmony, Indiana, was sold to Robert Owen. He was a self-made man who owned a large cotton mill at New Lanark, Scotland. There he had tried such advanced ideas as the ten-hour day, unemployment insurance, schools for the workers and their children, and good housing. He had conceived the idea that his reform theories could be extended to the larger community, and the opportunity to apply his ideas in the town of Harmony appealed to him. He purchased the community from Rapp for about \$150,000. Owen began setting up his New Moral Order before the Harmonists left. He renamed the town "New Harmony." He does not seem to have applied the same attention to his community as he had to his cotton mill and the venture failed within two years. The Owen experiment is one of the most interesting in the United States. He is certainly the father of many settlements, although none associated with him had much success.

By the time the rest of the community was moved from the Wabash in the spring of 1825, there was sufficient housing in Economy to put it up in some comfort. There were fields cleared and some of the industry was in operation. The store and woolen mill had been in operation since late in 1824. The Harmonists quickly established themselves in their new home. They set about building a permanent community as quickly as possible. In 1826 a traveler described the village as if it were almost finished. In July of that year another traveler described the garden as having paths, borders, a fountain with an allegorical figure, etc. Only two years before, this land had been uncleared wilderness. By 1831 most of the permanent buildings were up. These were many of the buildings that can be seen today.

In 1832 the first serious trouble in the Society came to a head. There had always been some unrest over the division of wealth and the adoption of celibacy. When a certain Count de Leon (which was the cognomen for Archduke Maximillian von Este, Lion of Judah, etc.), who claimed to be a prophet, arrived late in 1831, Rapp hoped that this was the Messiah. He brought the Count before the congregation, but the "Messiah" failed to reveal himself.

Disillusioned, Rapp wanted to terminate this visit, but instead Count Leon and his party stayed the whole winter. When they left in the spring they caused a schism in the Harmony Society. After much bickering, about one third of the members left and settled at the present site of Monaca, Pennsylvania, which they called "Phillipsburg." The Harmony Society agreed to give those who left \$105,000 in three installments to pay for any claim they felt they might have on the Society. The seceders set up another little communal settlement, but allowed marriage and a more liberal standard of living. Leon was not the leader that Rapp was and the settlement did not last long. The people who seceded did not give up the idea of communal rule and could be found scattered in other communal settlements from Louisiana to Oregon as late as 1880.

The payment of \$105,000 was to be made in three equal installments. The first two were made, but when the Harmony Society could not get a release from some of the seceders, it did not make the last payment. In 1833 the seceders came to Economy in a mob and demanded their money. True to their pacifist principles the Harmonists refused to defend themselves and locked their doors. The militia arrived late in the day and drove the mob off.

The "Lion of Judah" was a puzzling character who caused almost as much controversy after his death as he did in life. It is felt that he

was a certain Bernard Proli, who, despite some of his actions, probably was as sincere as was Rapp.

Those who left were largely the newer members of the Society and the ones who had an established trade. Moreover, many of these were the younger and more vigorous members and their loss was to be felt. The schism caused much ill feeling, and when the woolen mill burned in 1833, the fire was believed to have been caused by one of the seceders. However, those who were left were the ones who were really convinced of Rapp's mission and were loyal to the end.

The Society made itself into a financial power. Its large mills made cloth of all kinds which it sold widely. For a while it was able to dictate prices on the Pittsburgh market. Its mills were operated mainly by its own people, and it had advanced machinery both of its own making and purchased in the East. The Society experimented with silk. But time was moving on.

THE LATER HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The Society took in no new members and there were few children born. In 1817 most of the members had been with the Society since 1805 and a few from 1785. The United States was starting to go through the Industrial Revolution and much of the machinery of the Society, so modern in 1825, was now obsolete. George Rapp died in 1817! This must have been a blow to the Society as it had expected him to lead it into the Kingdom of Heaven. As we have tried to point out, Rapp's death came at a time when the youngest member would have been middle-aged and when the Society needed to recapitalize its whole manufacturing process. Rather than hire younger workers and recapitalize, the Society cut back on its manufacturing. By 1853 a visitor could say that little cloth was being made.

The Society had been governed by Rapp, but it was a democratic organization. Under him were two trustees and a council of elders (usually seven). These people were elected by the members; important questions were taken to the whole body. With Rapp's death the senior trustee became the ruler of the Society. He was Romelius Baker (1793-1868), the storekeeper. His house still stands. He had been reared in the Society and under his regime its religious life continued undiminished. Despite the fact that he was storekeeper and had once handled sums as high as \$500,000, the Society became relatively inactive in business until the end of his rule.

The junior trustee was Jacob Henrici (1801-1892). He had joined the Society after the move to Economy, but rose quickly under the

favor of George Rapp. Beginning in the late 1850's he started investing large sums of the Society's money in capital ventures. When Baker died in 1868 Henrici became senior trustee. While he ruled the Society it had a second growth and again became a power in financial circles in Pennsylvania. Henrici was head of the Society until 1892. He made several small changes in its religious profession, and in many ways was as important a man to the Society as was Rapp.

Under Baker and Henrici the Society practically ceased the manufacture of anything except what was required by its immediate needs. However, it did have large funds to invest. It had one of the first companies in the oil business, drilling wells right after Drake. It invested in railroads and at one time owned major parts of five, the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie being the most important. Henrici was an officer in this railroad. The Society bought land at the falls of the Beaver River and built the town of Beaver Falls. It carefully nourished this city, building a bank (which is still in business) and several factories, and helped Geneva College to move there. It can be said that there was hardly a business in the area which was not helped by the Harmony Society. It greatly expanded its belief in brotherhood and helped many worthwhile causes which were not profit-making. In fact, the Society was something of a "soft touch"; but its members never lost their belief in the approaching millennium—and what good would money do them when that time came?

By 1880 the average age of the members was about seventy. Even Henrici, who did not join the Society until 1826 and who was one of the younger members, was seventy-six. They just were not able to maintain the pace. By 1890 the Society was in financial trouble, although not so deeply as later writers would have it. The first moves to dissolve the Society came in that year. In 1892 Henrici died and the leadership fell to John Duss (1860-1951), who served until 1903. Under Duss the Society liquidated all its capitalist ventures and paid off its debts, but at the same time most of the assets disappeared. In 1894 the State tried to escheat the property—that is, take over as its heir. This was fought successfully in the courts for a while with the astonishing argument that the Society was not a religious society! Strange as it may seem, this is the argument which was finally accepted, and the State legislature passed an act declaring it so in 1916. Only the block which comprises the present Museum came to the State.

In 1903 Duss resigned in favor of his wife, who served until 1905, when she dissolved the Society. At that time there were only three members living.

Thus the Harmony Society and the town name of Economy were brought to an end at the same time. It is difficult to evaluate the life of a group such as this Society. The Harmonists came to this country seeking religious freedom. They built three cities in the wilderness and helped two areas grow. They lasted one hundred years. They helped themselves—but refused help to no man. The Museum of Old Economy, the town of Ambridge, and many institutions in the Ohio and Beaver River valleys owe their existence to these people; and we are still seeking for the “Brotherly Union and Social Harmony” of the Harmony Society. Who can say they failed?



YOUR TOUR OF OLD ECONOMY

The life of the Harmony Society was one large integrated whole. So was the community which it built. When you enter the museum of Old Economy you are entering the center of the old village of Economy—*Ökonomie* was the Harmonists' name for the type of religious-communal life they led. The Harmonists built their communities on a grid pattern, with the more important buildings in the center, then the houses, the factories, and finally the fields. This is one of the most successful applications of architecture to social needs one will find in the United States. The manufacturing complex and fields have disappeared, but many of the houses surrounding the central complex have survived and are still as useful now as they were over 140 years ago.

The Museum is composed of the governmental, the commercial, and the religious center (with the exception of the church) of the village of Economy. The neat, orderly arrangement once applied to the whole village. It applied to the lives of the villagers as well. Although no one building has great architectural merit, the whole is an outstanding example of town planning. The town was planned for living—not only in this world but in the next!

THE FEAST HALL

A necessary building in almost every German village is the town hall. It contains the city offices, the town archives, perhaps the school, and a small museum. The major function of this building is to furnish a meeting place for the electorate. The Feast Hall at Economy was such a building. As it did with everything else, the Harmony Society made the use of this building religious rather than secular.

THE MUSEUM

In 1826-27 the Harmony Society began writing to many places looking for specimens and art works for its Museum. By late 1827 it had a fair collection. To this it added the botanical collection of the doctor, J. Christoph Müller. This was placed in the first four rooms of the Feast Hall. The collection was eclectic and would not have been separated into collections the way we would do it today. Art was mixed with stuffed animals, botanical specimens with Indian relics. We have separated the art museum from the science museum. Many of the works of art hanging in the art room are from the original collection. The science room holds a small collection of stuffed animals. The cases in the center of the room are the gift of Mrs. C. S. Richards

in memory of Thomas Shields Robinson and hold scientific specimens. The rooms on the north side are now offices.

THE PRINTING PRESS

As a general rule, utopian societies set themselves up as an example to be followed and usually carried on some sort of propaganda program. If they could afford it they had a printing press. The Harmony Society considered itself an example, but was not interested in getting new members or starting branch societies. It did not feel the need for a press. However, it either acquired this one, or made it, about 1824. The Society hired a printer who taught Dr. Müller how to operate it. It printed six books and several single-sheet items. The books were the Society's hymn book, a book of religious thoughts by Rapp in German and English, a spelling book, a school singing book, and a book of pietistic thoughts. The last was probably by members of the Society. The press is made of wood and is of a type called a "Franklin" press—after Benjamin Franklin. All of the equipment in this room was that used by the Society, except for the type.

THE ADULT SCHOOL

It was necessary, pietists believed, for each individual to understand God. To do this one needed an education, so the Harmony Society had a series of schools. The Adult School taught religion and also used the collection of the Museum to teach science and botany. Self-trained engineers operated its factories and self-taught architects designed its buildings. Classes were held here and in the home. The room was probably originally furnished with tables; the cupboards at the end once held part of the library. On the wall are some examples of the art and the engineering work. The large machine with a glass wheel is a static electricity machine used in the school. The benches are from the children's school, which was a block away.

THE FEAST HALL

On the second floor of the Feast Hall is *the* Feast Hall. This large room can hold almost 1,000 people and was used for the special feasts of the Society. The feast was the closest thing to a sacrament it had. The feast was called *Liebesmahl*, love feast. The whole community gathered at noon on the day of the feast. It may have had a public settling of any differences before the meeting. Men sat on the right (south) side and women on the left side (north). Perhaps the children and proselytes sat in the rear. There was a regular meal of stew and noodles, bread, fruit in season, salad, beer, and wine. After the meal

there was a service. Since the love feasts were partly secular in nature, a portion of the service was of secular music; perhaps there was some other entertainment as well.

The love feasts were held on the usual Christian holidays, especially Good Friday, Easter, and Whitsuntide (the *Pfingfest*). Christmas may not have been celebrated in the beginning, although by 1860 it certainly was an important festival. The Harmonists also celebrated the *Harmoniefest*, February 15, to commemorate their founding. The Fourth of July was celebrated as the day they first landed in this country. In the middle of August they had a harvest festival (the *Erntefest*), and in the late fall (say, October) the *Liebesmahl*. New Year's Day was celebrated as a religious holiday. These love feasts were held almost whenever the mood struck them! Four a year would be the number held later.

The building started to collapse and the iron bars were used to tie it together. The doors at each end of the hall on the upper floor were said to have been used by George Rapp to preach to his followers. They were afraid of fire, so no cooking was done in the building; the kitchen was in a separate building.

THE FEAST KITCHEN

Standing to the north of the Feast Hall is the Feast Kitchen. The meals for the love feasts were cooked here. There are twelve large kettles sunk in ovens and these were used to cook the food. Only stewing can be done in ovens such as these. The hood overhead opens into a vent which allowed the hot air to escape. There is a large vent on the roof to let this air out. A stone sink sits in one corner and from this a drain runs to the outside. The Feast Kitchen was used for all types of quantity cooking such as making jelly, catsup, and applebutter, and for dyeing cloth, etc. Later these functions were moved to other buildings.

THE CABINETMAKER'S SHOP

In its drive to be self-sufficient, the Harmony Society tried to make almost everything it needed, and had many shops to manufacture essentials. The Cabinetmaker's Shop was among these. Almost all furniture for Economy was made in this shop. You will see a great amount of Harmonist furniture on your tour. Many of the shops of the Society made items for sale "outside," but the cabinet shop evidently supplied only the Society. The cabinetmaker of the early nineteenth century also made the moldings, trim, doors, sash, mantles, etc.,



Feast Kitchen and Granary (rear)

used in the houses—so it can be seen he was a busy man! Many of the tools you see were the property of the Harmony Society craftsmen. The Museum keeps a full-time cabinetmaker in the shop, and you can get an idea of some of the practices from him. Associated with this shop was a turner's shop, which made round objects. This building no longer stands, although you can see two of the lathes.

THE UTILITY BUILDING OR FIRE HOUSE

There were once many buildings such as the Fire House scattered about Economy. These buildings were so cheap in terms of their economy that the Society did not bother to paint them. This building is now used as the fire station. In it is the big 1826 pumper of the Society. It made this engine itself. It had no suction hose and was filled by a bucket brigade. Men would pump on the "brake" arms and one man would direct the stream of water on the fire. The smaller engine was made in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1836 and was purchased after the woolen mill burned in 1833. Although not so large as the Harmonist engine, it has a suction hose. The most one could expect

either of these engines to pump was about 125 gallons a minute. All the men of the Society were considered members of the fire company and were expected to fall out when the fire bell rang. They probably had a special ring on the church bell for a fire alarm.

Also in this building is the Harmony Society hearse. It was purchased in the 1850's. Before that the Harmonists used a wagon for funerals.

THE GRANARY AND CIDER CELLAR

An important public building in German villages often was the public barn. It was used to store the taxes, the church tithe, public stores, and village cattle. As they did with much else, the Harmonists adapted this practice to a religious use. The millennium, they understood, was not going to arrive immediately. Whether it would take seven years or seven times seventy was unclear. However, fire, disease, and starvation would precede it. The Granary, well stocked with food, would insure that the Harmonists ate during this period. Also, remembering days of want in Germany, they wished to have plenty on hand.

A year's supply of grain was stored on the top three and a half floors. The lower floor held other supplies. The first floor of the Granary is half-timbered, a type of construction used in Germany. The building is constructed of huge chestnut beams. One of these is fifty-five feet long and twelve inches square. The building was prefabricated on the ground. This was a common building practice of the time. The Harmonists used this system on their houses also. A large hoist house stands on the west side. If time and conditions permit, you will be taken in this building as part of your tour.

Underneath the south end of the building is a large cider cellar. Cider came close to being the American national drink at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Harmonists made both "boiled" (sweet) and hard cider. This cellar is not part of the tour.

THE TAILOR'S SHOP

The Tailor's Shop was a large building used as a haberdashery. Most of the clothing needs were supplied from this building. It was one of the first buildings at Economy.

THE WINE CELLAR

Underneath the Tailor's Shop is the Wine Cellar. This is a large vaulted chamber made of stone. It is deep to keep the wine cool. The vault (arch) was built to support the walls and the ceiling, which bear



Left to right, Baker House, Store, and Tailor's Shop and Wine Cellar

the weight of the building. Also, two large chimneys rest on the center of the vault.

The largest of the casks holds about 1,150 gallons. There were once some in the center that were larger. The oval-shaped casks were made to fit into narrow places and were not much harder to make than the round ones. The Harmony Society supplied its own wants from the Wine Cellar and sold the surplus. It had several other cellars for wine but this is the only vaulted one.

THE TAILOR'S SHOP

The Tailor's Shop was the southeast room on the first floor. In it are two large tailor's benches. There were no sewing machines and the tailor sat cross-legged on the large table and spread his work around him. There is also a cutting table and an ironing table. The large irons were called "tailor's geese" and were for flattening seams in the process of being sewed. The large copper with three spouts is a hat steamer. The tailor probably was responsible for the men's clothing; women members probably made their own, although at one time the Society had a seamstress shop.

As the members of the Harmony Society filed into church each Sunday, the tailor and the shoemaker would stand at the door and check the condition of their clothing. If anyone had shabby dress or run-down shoes, one craftsman or the other would step forward and say, "Come, Brother, to the Tailor's Shop (or Shoemaker's Shop) and we will make you something better." They were responsible for the appearance of the members of the Society and took pride in their work. As it was a communal society, all cloth and clothing were supplied to the members. When their own wants were supplied they sold their surplus to outsiders.

THE SHOEMAKER'S SHOP

On the west side of the Tailor's Shop was the Shoemaker's Shop. There all the shoes for the Society were made, along with a surplus for sale. There sometimes were as many as fifteen shoemakers at work. One can see their benches lined up by the windows so they could get the light. In the corner is the *last* stand. The lasts, or forms for the shoes, will make only one shape of shoe. This fitted either the right or the left foot, as suited the wearer. Comfort was a sometime thing. The shoes made in this shop were sold in the Store next door and wholesaled all through the Ohio-Mississippi Valley.

THE BARBER'S SHOP

The northeast room is the Barber's Shop. One of the tailors acted as the barber. The barber's chair sits in the middle of the room. It is one of the most interesting pieces manufactured at Economy—the arms are swans' heads. The men of the Society grew beards, but did not have mustaches, as that was considered too military for these pacifists. This room also was used for storage.

THE WEAVING EXHIBIT

The second room of the Shoemaker's Shop, perhaps the first room you will see when you enter the building, has been made into a weaving and textile exhibit. All phases of the manufacture of woolen cloth from the raw wool to the finished cloth are shown. Some of the equipment used was made by the Harmony Society.

This is a "living" exhibit and is open only when a craftsman is available.

THE HAT SHOP

The Harmonists made a high quality wool hat which they sold widely. It was made of merino wool and was what we would call a

"top hat." These were made on the second floor of this building and sold through the Store. This floor is not open to the public.

They also made a straw hat for their own use in the summer. The straw was split, braided into strips, and sewed into hats. The equipment to make them, along with some of the hats, is still in our collection.

THE STORE

The Store was a major factor in the success of the economic life of the Harmony Society; it was the market for all sales of Harmonist-made products. Goods for the members were distributed through the Store and the storekeeper was an important man. Eventually the storekeeper at Economy, Romelius Baker, became head of the Society. The Store entered into all facets of the life of the Society without dominating them.

THE STORE

Most communal societies had a store. It was used to distribute goods to the members. The Store of the Harmony Society was also used for this purpose, although its primary purpose was to sell the goods of the Society to outsiders. It could be considered an axiom that success in the religious life of a communal society was absolutely correlated with success in commercial life. One did not have one without the other. The Harmony Society was successful in both areas.

The Store was the office of the storekeeper. He handled almost all the sales of the Society. The Store itself handled products made by the Society, shoes, hats, flour, whiskey, and farm products, but principally cloth. The Society purchased things it did not make and some of these were also carried in the Store, which was more a hardware store than anything else. Many of the goods of the Society were sold at the point of manufacture. Thus one might buy potatoes at the potato barn. The transaction was handled, however, through the Store. In its heyday (1825-1850) the Society may have done a gross business of over \$100,000 a year in the Store. This was big business in a day in which a laborer could be hired for thirteen dollars a month!

Most communal societies distributed necessities to each individual member. This system will work only when every member is dedicated to the common cause. Most societies had problems with their stores and distribution and most societies lasted only a year or two. The Harmony Society did not make the individual responsible for the reception of goods but made the *household* responsible. Each household received the food it needed, the utensils, the furniture, firewood,

proper housing, etc. The only thing an individual received directly was his clothing. Households drew what was needed through the Store. Accounts were kept on each household. We do not know if these accounts were compared at the end of the year, but so long as not too much was drawn, nothing was said. When we understand that there were approximately 120 households costing at least \$300 each a year, or totaling about \$36,000 a year, we can understand the importance of the Store. Counting cash sales and goods and food distributed to members, the Store was doing a business of anywhere from \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year. It was big business! The economics and make-up of a household will be discussed in the section on the typical house.

The storeroom of the Store has been restored to its original appearance. The shelves around the walls hold some of the products of the Society and there are large amounts of cloth. The Post Office was the little desk with the gallery around it which is near the window. The storekeeper was the postmaster. The pipe from the stove goes up through a hatch in the ceiling. Heat which normally would have been wasted was caught in a drum stove on the second floor and used to heat that floor.


THE COUNTING ROOM

This is a modern name given to the office of the storekeeper and it is where the accounts of the Store were kept. The storekeeper was an important man, not only in the Society but in western Pennsylvania. His office, which was furnished as a living room, reflected this importance.

THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Dr. Johann Christoph Müller was as important a man in the Society as was Mr. Baker, the storekeeper. He was one of the leaders. In addition to his medical practice Dr. Müller taught school, taught music, conducted the little symphony orchestra, tended the four-acre botanical garden, was in charge of the Museum, operated the printing press, and made illuminations. His activities with the Society were many. His office was in the Store and this was the place where he practiced medicine with Dr. William Schmidt (or Smith). The Harmonists believed in the practice of brotherhood and in addition to treating the ills of the Society members the two doctors treated those of all others. Dr. Müller was the first doctor in Butler County to be graduated from a university. When Dr. Müller left in the schism of 1832, Conrad Feucht became the Society's doctor. At his death the Society had a doctor come from Pittsburgh several days a week to take care

Ohio River


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HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
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BEAVER COUNTY, PA.
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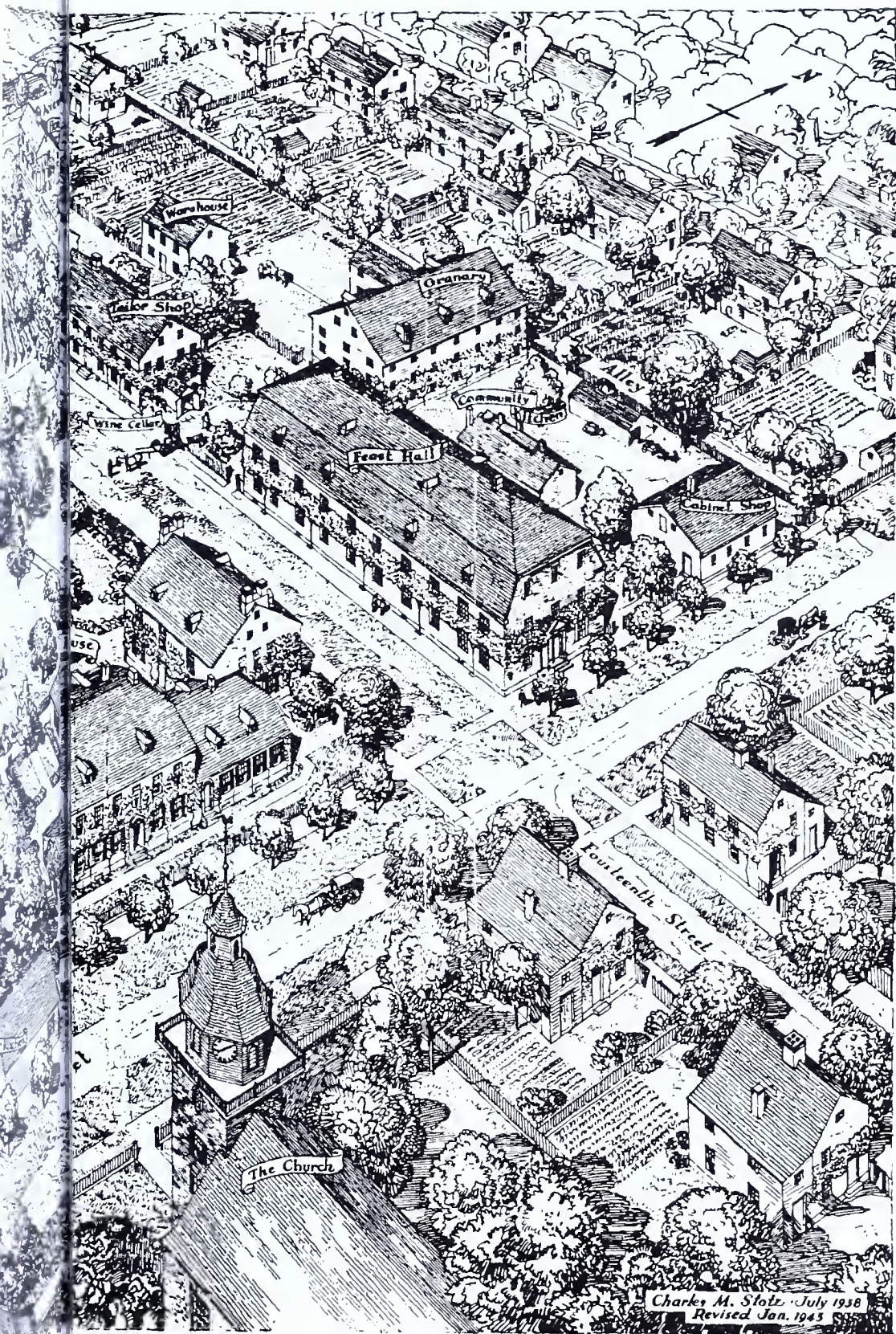
Garden Pavilion

Thirteenth Street

Summer Kitchen

Cottages





Charles M. Stoltz July 1938
Revised Jan. 1945

of the needs of the members. The two chairs and the desk once belonged to Dr. Feucht. Two of Dr. Müller's illuminations hang over the desk. We have several other pieces that once belonged to him and which are now scattered throughout Old Economy. There is another doctor's office still standing near the Museum complex.

THE APOTHECARY SHOP

In addition to being a doctor of medicine Dr. Müller was a botanist of high order. In a day when every doctor was his own druggist he must have been a good one. The Apothecary Shop, or drugstore, was next to the Doctor's Office where it would be handy. The druggist carried not only the usual medicines of the day but also dye chemicals, chemicals such as potash, and occasionally such things as turpentine. The microscope seen here was once used by the Society. Some of the glass chemical apparatus was found here at Economy.

THE SHOE STORE

The large room in front of the Doctor's Office and Apothecary Shop was the Shoe Store. This is an extension of the storeroom on the other side of the hall. Here were sold the leather goods made by the Society and other items too bulky to keep in the Store. The Museum has had a great deal of difficulty in finding material to put in this room.

THE TYPICAL DWELLING: THE BAKER HOUSE

The household was the basic unit in the Harmony Society. We have discussed the relation of the household to the Store. In the Baker House, which we have set up as a typical dwelling, you can see how this operated. The problem in these societies was to provide enough for each individual, allow for differences in need, and make sure there was an equitable division. The other societies which failed did so quite often because they did not solve this problem. In the Harmony Society each member became also a member of a household. If a husband and wife joined together they were members of the same household and lived a celibate existence in the same house. They might join relatives, friends, or other people with whom they could be compatible. The aged and infirm were probably distributed among the houses in order to share the load. The Harmony Society adopted numerous orphaned children and these probably were distributed on the same basis. The households were kept small. The smallest unit was three members and the largest was eleven. There were about 120 households at one time. The houses were either mass-produced (as

in Indiana) or all built to one plan. Their dimensions do not vary much and materials, trim, window size, etc. are all standard. When a house was to be built the timber was delivered to the site pre-cut, with the interior woodwork, window casings, sash, and the proper number of bricks. Then a crew would come and put the house up.

Each household drew what was needed for its members and was responsible for the distribution of goods. This allowed for as much individual freedom as was possible under its rules. Some of the members had tasks they performed away from the house and would return for their meals and rest. The head of the house was a male member who was considered responsible for the conduct of the household, and it was known by his name. You are in the Langenbacher House. The Langenbacher family changed its name to Baker when its members learned English. In 1847 Romelius L. Baker became leader of the Society.

Under its head, and the housekeeper, the household was expected to be a self-sufficient unit in a harmonious whole. When the housekeeper needed something she went to the proper store, where they knew how many members were in her household and how much to give her. If the household did not live too "worldly" they were allowed to do what they wished with the goods. This allowed a great deal of freedom inside a paternalistic society, but we should not have the idea that very much individuality was tolerated.

THE BAKER HOUSE

You enter in the foyer, or a sort of mud room. It was used as a place to remove wraps, store boots, etc. Its primary purpose was to keep the cold air from coming in the front door. Through this room you can go to either the kitchen or the living room. The kitchen was where the meals of the household were cooked. It is important to remember that the regular meals were cooked in the home and only the Love Feasts were eaten in common. The kitchen has a stone sink similar to the one in the Community Kitchen.

The living room is where the household ate and relaxed. It is a large room of over 400 square feet—but there were eight people living in the house. The furniture is Harmonist made. The table is small for the number of people living here, but perhaps they ate in the old European custom of the men eating first, then women, and then children. The corner cupboard was made by a man associated with Economy—perhaps apprenticed in the Cabinet Shop. The Harmonists probably did not use corner cupboards, but we have set up this one to show some of the china used in the Harmonist home. The top

shelf holds some of the Harmonists' pottery, while the lower holds some English china which the Harmonists called "Queen's Ware." We might call it "lusterware." They purchased huge quantities for their own use and for sale in the Store. The blue Wedgewood was actually used in this house in the 1890's. It is the gift of Mrs. Charles R. (Ernestine Ott) May. In this room the larger society was duplicated on a smaller scale, with each person having his duties and place and each taking care of the other.

The first-floor bedroom is in the addition at the rear of the house. We have arranged it as if two women were living here. A Mrs. Munch was the housekeeper in the Baker House, and we assume that she and her daughter were living here. The simple beds have rope springs. The people were not much smaller—they just slept in smaller beds. These narrow beds were typical of a celibate household. A normal American home would more likely have a double bed. Every member had a chest in which to keep clothing and personal things. The Harmonists placed a great deal of emphasis on simplicity, and everything was kept out of sight. The large wardrobes were used for clothing and linen.

Underneath the house is a small root cellar used to store vegetables throughout the winter. This is unusual in that there are three large tunnels under the house which ventilate the cellar. The second-floor plan is the same as the first, allowing for one very large bedroom. Another unusual feature of this house is that the door is on the side. The Harmonists never explained this to anyone, but it probably was done in this fashion so that the household would have a private entrance off the street. It is not uncommon in the area of Germany they came from. They just institutionalized it here.

THE FAMILY SHED AND THE KITCHEN GARDEN

Every house had a family shed or shared one with the house behind it. This was a combination woodshed, tool shed, food storage, barn, and outhouse. The Baker House shed has been reconstructed on the original site. It has four rooms. From east to west, these rooms were used for fowl, storage of food and the outhouse, tool storage, and wood storage. Each household was supplied with enough chickens to fill its needs. Sometimes a household kept a goat or two. As the century wore on, more and more members kept a cow from the common herd.

All food was drawn from the common store, except for fresh vegetables, which each household grew for itself. Each house was on a large lot about four times the floor area of the house. The members of the household farmed this in any way they wished. They grew

vegetables for table use, flowers, and herbs. This is another example of the amount of individuality allowed inside this communal group. This garden has been restored by the Piccadilly Garden Club, whose members have gone to a great deal of effort to make it the same as the original and to maintain it.

THE GREAT HOUSE GARDEN

There is no stopping nor retrogressing in the Kingdom of Heaven, but a pressing forward to a goal where a temple of God is erected in a green and tranquil valley, that those who are susceptible of light may find consolation and repose, and worship in the holy Tabernacle in order and harmony.*

In many German villages there was a formal garden. This might be maintained by the village leader or perhaps the bishop. Although one could not go in it any time one wished, the garden was occasionally opened to the public. A larger town might have a public garden near the town square. Most of these gardens would have been made into imitations of French formal gardens, especially one such as the Tuileries. In the middle of the eighteenth century there was a strong Chinese influence. These gardens had a formal arrangement, with paths, fountains, hedges, grottoes, and statuary.

The Harmonists had seen these gardens in Germany and, as they did with so many other things, adapted this style to religious purposes. The other two communities had had town squares around which almost all of the activities of the community centered. At Economy the Garden was placed in the center of the town and everything was focused around it. There was no town square.

The Garden was very important to the Harmonists. It was laid out even before some of the members had permanent houses. The Harmonists landed at Economy in May of 1824. The land, except for a few hay fields, was an uncleared wilderness. Exactly two years later the Duke of Saxe-Weimar Eisenach visited Economy and had this to say about the Garden:

There is also a garden containing several acres with flowers and vegetables, as well as a vineyard, situated on a terrace-shaped half circle on the hill, ending in a bower. I especially admired the beautiful tulips of this garden, in the midst of which is a round basin with a noble spring. Mr. Rapp intends to build a temple here, in which he will place a statue of Harmony; the statue is now ready. It is the work of a carver in Philadelphia and is a colossal wooden figure, like the

* Rapp, *Thoughts*, p. 11.

figure-head of a ship. In the garden are several cottages. One of them is roofed with sods and used for a pastry house. On the top is a sort of seat, where hereafter musicians are to sit; within there is a temporary frame hall. Near the garden is the green-house; this house, as well as the garden, is under the inspection of a very pretty girl, Miss Hildegard [Mutschler], a relative of Mr. Rapp and possessed of much botanical knowledge.*

Another traveler two months later mentions borders and paths.

The Great House Garden is still pretty much the way it was described by the Duke. In the center of the Garden is the large Pavilion. This replaced the fountain ("spring" to the good Duke) in 1831. It is the temple which Rapp intended to build; Rapp's adopted son Frederick is believed to have been the architect. In this temple stands the "colossal" wooden figure. The original was by William Rush, of Philadelphia, who was originally a carver of ships' figureheads—hence the Duke's description. The original statue stood in the fountain, with water spraying out of the raised fingers of her right hand. After the Pavilion was built she was moved to the Grotto, which will be described later. The Pavilion was used by the orchestra. At a later time it played from the roof. Some sort of circular stairs was built so the orchestra could climb up. The villagers would stroll in the garden on warm summer evenings and listen to the band. The original fountain was supplied from a spring back of the town, and it is interesting to note that the Harmony Society was able to supply water under pressure only two years after the land had been uncleared wilderness. The original statue of Harmony was destroyed in the 1890's during a modernization campaign. The present figure is a copy of another Rush work by Louis Vergobbi and is the gift of the Robinson family.

One could ask why these good pietists who did not even have a cross in their church had a statue in the garden. This is an allegorical figure. It represents the spiritual harmony they hoped to achieve here on earth and afterwards in heaven. If you will recall that the design of this garden was influenced by the French gardens of the mid-eighteenth century and that the French at this time were in a sort of romantic period, you will understand this better. In their gardens they placed allegorical figures as well as the usual imitation classical ones. These were copied by the Germans and hence by the Harmonists. As they did with every other "worldly" thing they used, they gave this a religious connotation.

* Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, *Travels through North America, during the years 1825 and 1826* (Philadelphia, 1828), II, 62.

The finials on the Pavilion were originally of wood and were carved by Joseph Woodwell, of Pittsburgh. Four of the originals survive and two are in our collection—the gift of the Woodwell family. The present finials are reproductions which have been done in stone so they will survive the weather. These reproductions are also the gift of the Robinson family.

In the northwest corner of the Garden is the grape arbor referred to by the Duke. It is fan-shaped and faces south. The sun shines



The Garden Pavilion and Wooden Figure

equally well on every row—grapes need a lot of sunlight. This arbor is built from dirt excavated for the buildings across the street. On top is a little pavilion as described by the Duke.

In the opposite corner stands the Grotto. This was a common feature of European gardens of the eighteenth century. Again it is a mundane feature which the Harmony Society adapted to religious purposes. One can imagine Marie Antoinette in her brocaded shepherdess gown having her chocolate in such a building; but the Harmonists used it for meditation. The exterior is made of rough stones and the roof is thatched. European travelers often described it as a granary, so perhaps it resembles the granary of a small German farm. The interior is completely out of keeping with the exterior. The interior is decorated as a Greek Temple. There is a large dome, in the center of which is a gold lily.

How extraordinary and astonishing that the Lily should make its appearance, just at the time when the moral faculties of the whole human mass were almost exhausted and decayed . . . *

The Harmonists were Christians and spent the whole of their lives looking for the Second Coming, but they used no religious symbols. The only cross at Economy appears on the church tower. Other symbols had religious meaning to them, particularly the rose and the lily. These flowers were often used to represent the glory of the Godhead or the resurrection. Other values have been assigned to other features of the interior, but these are tenuous at best.

The contrast between the rough exterior of this building and the interior is the effect that the Harmonists sought. Harmony may not look worthwhile from the outside, but once achieved it is beautiful. At the other two communities they had similar buildings. The grotto in Harmony, Indiana, was surrounded by a maze. We think the Harmonists used this as a place of meditation.

The Garden itself is laid out in a formal pattern with paths dividing it into quarters. The paths are lined with boxwood and there are many flowers. An attempt is made to have only plants which could have been grown here in 1830. The original greenhouse is gone but it has been replaced with a modern one. The original may have been a complicated one which opened in the middle, similar to the one they had in Indiana.

The Garden represents the activities of many people, especially the

* Rapp, *Thoughts*, p. 9.

Garden Club of Allegheny County, the Ambridge Woman's Club, the landscape architect Mr. Ralph Griswold, and the staff of the Museum.

There was once another garden at Economy. This was a four-acre tract south of the village proper. It contained the botanical garden of the doctor; another grotto (this one of wood), surrounded by a maze; and a zoo.

THE GREAT HOUSE

As one approaches the rear of the Great House from the Garden, one is immediately impressed with its size. It has twenty-five rooms and two wings. The central portion was finished in 1826. The large galleries in the rear catch the breeze which usually blows from the west. The front of the house is on Church Street. The Harmonists turned the "Beaver Road" down from the base of the hill to the east and ran it right through the town past the Great House. This was partly to bring customers into town and partly so that these customers "could see what a united brethren could do," according to George Rapp. On the north is another two-story house, which was the home of Frederick Rapp.

THE FREDERICK RAPP HOUSE

Frederick Rapp was born in 1775 as Frederick Reichert, and became the adopted son of George Rapp prior to 1803. Rapp seems to have preferred him over his own son. Frederick evidently had originally been a stonemason and had taken training as a surveyor, apparently to help the Society lay out its first village in the United States. He had assumed direction of its manufacturing ventures, and he and the Langenbacher brothers shared the direction of the business end of the Society. He was one of the intellectuals of the Society, joining Dr. Müller in such ventures as the Museum and the orchestra. He was responsible for the planning and evidently the architecture of all three of the communities. Frederick Rapp lived in the world as well as in the Society. He always had a house separate from Father Rapp.

The Frederick Rapp House was probably built between 1828 and 1831. It is in a much earlier style than the Great House and even the methods of construction are earlier. It is the only house at Economy with the chimney at the gables. There is a strong tradition that Frederick Rapp had an art gallery on the second floor of this building; this is in keeping with his character as one of the intellectuals of the Society.

You probably entered the house at the main hall on the east (front) side. Directly down the hall on the right are the bedroom and the

bed/sitting room of Frederick Rapp. The rooms are furnished with Harmonist furniture and some American pieces. The Harmonists occasionally bought furnishings and these went to the more important members. The carpeting is typical of the period. The pattern is called "rainbow" for obvious reasons. The wallpaper is reproduced from samples found in this house. Frederick Rapp had a wide range of interests and one can see scattered around the room such things as a surveyor's compass, a microscope, musical instruments, and books. Shown on the wall are some eighteenth-century town plans, which must have helped inspire the design of the three villages of the Society. There is a plan of the hotel which shows some of the architecture of the Harmony Society. This plan probably was drawn in the adult school. Frederick Rapp died in 1834 and all the furnishings are from before that time.

In the hall the stairway has a very interesting rope design carved on the stairs. The bannister is probably a little later than the stairway. On the end of the rail is a rose or flower design which appears on the other two railings in the Great House. The rose and other flowers were often used to represent the approaching millennium. The hall leads to a small room which we have furnished as Frederick Rapp's Study. Below this room is an arched vault which was used to store money. The original study was on the second floor.

The Frederick Rapp House reflects the importance and good taste of this man who started life as an obscure stonecutter and became one of the financial giants in America. It is being furnished jointly by the Harmonic Associates and the Museum.

THE GEORGE RAPP HOUSE

When you pass from Frederick Rapp's Study into the next room you go into the home of George Rapp. We have discussed his character and life at some length; his house reflects the importance of the man to his followers and to the world (as does Frederick Rapp's House). The first room we enter is the bedroom of Conrad Boehm, who was a glover. Boehm was one of the main supporters of Rapp and was his confidant. Although little is known about him, his importance is shown by the fact that he lived in the Great House near the "Father." His son Eusebius lived in the Great House after his father's death. The next bedroom is that of George Fleckhammer, who shared a similar position of trust. Fleckhammer was a gardener and his closeness to Rapp belied his lowly occupation.

We pass from Fleckhammer's room into a hall and then into George Rapp's Bedroom. Between the wall and the bedroom is a vault. This



The Great House, Feast Hall in rear

is a chamber at the bottom of the steps where at one time the Harmonists kept over \$500,000 in specie. This fund was assembled after the schism (1832-33) for an emergency use and was considered a church fund. There are two other vaults, both under the Frederick Rapp House. It seems unlikely that Rapp would have had a door opening onto this vault from any place other than his bedroom. The doorway into the hall, in this case, was probably cut later. We have no idea when it was installed.

George Rapp's Bedroom contains his bed and chest. The other furniture is of Harmonist manufacture. Rapp lived in this room from 1826 until his death in 1847. He was a complicated man with a wide range of interests in religion, science, music, and agriculture. It is difficult to decide whether to give him the bare cell of a monk or the cluttered study of an intellectual. We have furnished the room rather elegantly, as befitted his rank and this house.

The next room is Rapp's Study. It was really the office of the Society. The business of the Society was conducted from this room. Until Frederick Rapp's death in 1834, George Rapp shared the responsibility of the business operation with him, but the physical operation

of a community of about 750 people took place from this house and from this room. Rapp took a deep interest in the lives of his followers; this room would have been a cross between the mayor's office and the inner sanctum of the abbot. Part of the beliefs of the Society involved the private or public confession of guilt and Rapp must have heard many a heart unburdened in this room. His last sermon was preached from one of the windows of this room. He also must have closed many a business deal there. The bars are perhaps from the later period of Jacob Henrici (1868-1892). These two rooms were occupied by the successive leaders of the Society: Romelius Baker (1847-1868), Jacob Henrici (1868-1892), and John Duss (1892 ca. 1916).

Henrici was in many ways as important a man to the Society as was Rapp. He was born in Württemberg in 1801 and joined the Society in 1826 as a young man. He had an education in music and was the schoolteacher and orchestra conductor for a period of time. He rose rapidly in George Rapp's estimation and moved into the Great House shortly after it was built. He was very close to Rapp and lived in the Great House with him. Henrici rose to become business head



Father George Rapp's Bedroom

of the Society in about 1855 and its actual head in 1868. He led the Society through a second period of financial growth. The spirit of the Society may be said to have died with him in 1892.

The stove was actually fitted-up with the flue running through the ceiling. A brick flue rests on the second-floor ceiling joists. There is a similar arrangement in the next room we shall visit. The safe is the original one of the Society. It is an iron-bound safe and the keyhole can be found by moving two trick rivet heads. Several of the paintings and decorations on the wall are from a later period than that of George Rapp. It is difficult to fix a period for a house which was occupied by as many important people as was this one, but we have tried to set it at before 1850.

Every home of this period had at least two living rooms, one of which was a formal parlor or drawing room. The living room at the rear of the Great House is the everyday parlor. We call it the "Reception Room" as it was used for receiving visitors and for business purposes, as well as for relaxation. Most of the furniture is of Harmonist manufacture and the wide variety suggests the uses of this room. The large painting on the wall is a Franz Floris, "Suffer the Little Children . . ." and is one of the best in the Harmony Society Collection. This room has easy access to the garden behind the house.

The front parlor or Trustees' Room is one of the best preserved rooms in the Museum complex. The room was kept as a monument to Rapp and most of the furniture is the original in the original location. The idea behind decoration in this period was to overwhelm the visitor, and this explains some of the decorations. Furniture was commonly placed along the wall to facilitate cleaning. The room was used for formal reception of visitors, and the trustees assembled here after church service to sing hymns and to discuss community business. The room has seen many important visitors, including the Marquis de Lafayette, Charles Dickens, and Rudyard Kipling.

The two pianos were in the church until late in the 1840's or early 1850's and were brought over after the Society purchased an organ. Jacob Henrici and Gertrude Rapp used to play duets. The pianos have a fourth pedal, which pumps a small reed organ attachment. The large painting is "Christ Healing the Sick" and is a copy of the original by Benjamin West (1738-1820). It was purchased by the Society along with the rest of its collection of art works in 1826-27. This is the only room in the Great House with a stove in the fireplace. Evidently, after the other rooms had stoves added, this one still had a fire in the fireplace.

The dining room is where the members of the Great House ate their more formal meals. It was a common practice to eat meals almost anywhere. All the Harmonist tables had removable tops to facilitate moving. However, the dinner, or noon meal, was eaten under fairly formal circumstances in the dining room. Visitors were entertained here. The large wine cupboard was originally in this room; wine was a part of the Harmonists' way of life. This cupboard has some interesting styling characteristics which are different from the rest of the Harmonist furniture. Some of the glassware and the silver were also used in this room. The rest of the furniture is in keeping with the Harmonist practice of mixing their own with other furniture.

Behind the dining room is Gertrude Rapp's Bedroom. Gertrude was the granddaughter of George and was born in 1808. She was sixteen when the Society began its move to Economy. She was considered quite talented and pretty. As she grew up she was prepared to live in the world along with the rest of the Society leaders. Eventually she was in charge of the silk industry. In the schism she is said to have taken a part by throwing water on the seceders as they stormed the Great House. There is some question about when this room was built and about its shape; it is, perhaps, Gertrude's room of a later period when she was a little too old to climb stairs. Some of the drawings on the wall were done by Gertrude, and her sewing box and spinning wheel are in the room. The wheel was given to her when she was fifteen (1823) because not even members of the Great House were allowed to sit idle. The Harmonists made spinning wheels for sale in large quantities and this probably is one of theirs.

The kitchen of the Great House not only prepared all the meals for the Great House but was a food factory as well. There were no prepared or processed foods in 1826 as are available to the homemaker today. Foods were prepared in the kitchen straight from the field, or were preserved and stored. The kitchen is dominated by the large fireplace in which all the cooking was done. A stove was added at a later date, perhaps as early as 1830. The stone sink in the corner is typical of German architecture of this period. There are four similar sinks on the Museum grounds. After use, water was dumped in the sink and allowed to flow out the vent, where it was caught in a barrel. Some of the pottery was made by the Harmony Society, which made an excellent redware and a green slipware. The trap door leads to Father Rapp's wine cellar where, according to travelers, excellent wines were kept. Behind the kitchen is the pantry, where food was processed and some of the simpler meals were eaten.



Great House Dining Room

THE GREAT HOUSE KITCHEN GARDEN

Behind the Great House on the south is a Kitchen Garden. The Great House had such a garden, as did the Baker House and all the other houses. The occupants grew vegetables, flowers, and herbs. We have made this garden a little more elaborate than a typical kitchen garden as there were more people available to work on this one. We have many lists of plants and seeds acquired by the Harmony Society and have a good idea of what they grew. The arrangement of the garden follows practices common to this period. This garden is maintained through the efforts of the Garden Club of Allegheny County and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

In the center of the Kitchen Garden is a sundial. This is a six-sided instrument which can tell time from early in the morning until the last light. The gnomons on the east and west sides are set at the same degree as the latitude at which the instrument is to be placed. This latitude is one and a half degrees off for Economy, indicating that the sundial probably was made in Harmony, Indiana. It is marked "Economy, 1825" and may have been some sort of dedication marker. It is

a copy of a type of pocket sundial which was often carried during this period. This present one is a reproduction of the original, which is still in our possession, and is a gift of the Garden Club of Allegheny County. The Harmonists also had an elaborate sundial in Harmony, Indiana.

Behind the Kitchen Garden on the street (now 13th Street) were the greenhouse and the bakery of the Harmony Society. Both buildings are gone but a modern greenhouse has been erected on the site of the old Harmonist one. In this building most of the plants for the garden are started and our gardener has a chance to show off his skill. Attached to the greenhouse is a stove house used to get semitropicals through the winter. The Harmonists tried to plant every tree which grew in Pennsylvania, and this included such things as lime, orange, and lemon trees, which had to be protected in the winter.

On the east of the Kitchen Garden is a small herb garden. This garden specializes in medicinal and dye herbs but has pot herbs as well. It was constructed and is maintained by the Herb Society of America. Some herbs are sold in our gift shop.

THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

At the extreme corner of the Great House Square is the Carriage House. This is where George Rapp's vehicles were kept. As soon as the Harmonists moved to Economy they purchased a gig, or two-wheeled carriage for him. He was sixty-eight and had many activities which required travel. George Rapp's carriage, which was made for him in 1843, is still in our collection. It is an early type of phaeton and can be enclosed, thereby protecting the eighty-six-year-old man for whom it was intended. The vehicle has a set of folding steps on each side which unfold almost to the ground. The Harmonie Associates operate a gift shop in this building and you are welcome to stop and browse a little. Light refreshment also is available.

THE SUMMER KITCHEN

Next to the Great House is the Summer or Jelly Kitchen. It was used as a means to escape from the hot fireplace or great iron stove on summer days. Jelly was made here for use in the Great House and for sale. The Summer Kitchen also was used for many quantity cooking jobs. It now houses beverage machines and an office.

THE PUMP

The last item you will see before you leave the museum grounds is one of the town pumps. There was one of these on almost every square

and they were used to supply water for washing and for watering cattle. Another major function was to supply water for fire fighting purposes. This well is about eighty-seven feet deep and the pump operates a series of seven pumps in order to raise the water to ground level. The Harmonists used about every form of water supply system known in the nineteenth century, from hand-carried buckets to forced systems in mains. Water for drinking was sent through wooden mains from a pond in the back of the town. As we have seen earlier, there was enough pressure in this system to operate a fountain in the Garden as early as 1826. It was the Harmonists' consciousness of cleanliness which accounted for their good health and long life.

END OF THE TOUR

You have now seen the center of the village of Economy. At one time this was a bustling community of about 750 people. They made a wide range of products which commanded a premium price and made them wealthy. Now all that remains are the buildings and some of the things associated with the life of the people. It is important to remember that their spiritual life was much more important to them than their material life and that the material remains of the Harmony Society are a direct result of their beliefs. If the people who built Economy had not believed as they did there would have been no Old Economy.

OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM

Around the Museum grounds are about sixteen square blocks containing many buildings belonging to the original village and built by the Harmony Society. Most of these buildings are in use as homes. It is important to remember that the village was much larger than the Museum grounds and that many people lived here.

THE FIRST AND SECOND CHURCH BUILDINGS

Almost the first building the Harmonists erected in 1824 was the church building. This was up by June of that year. It is still standing at 270 15th Street. It is a large two-story building and has an elaborate door in the center. A similar door is on the other side. Women entered at one door and men at the other. After the Feast Hall was completed ca. 1828, the church services were moved there and this building was used as a granary. It is now an apartment house.

In 1828 the Harmonists started their second church building, which still stands between Creese and 14th streets on Church Street. This



The Church, now St. John's Lutheran

is a large structure with a tower and spire at the west end. A large one-handed clock is installed in the tower. Until after 1900 the tower could be seen for miles and the clock told the hour to everyone within hearing. The bell in the tower called people to church service and was also the fire bell.

Although the church appears to be oriented east-west, as is common

with Christian churches, the actual orientation is north-south. It was a common practice of German churches to hold their service along the long wall of the building instead of along the short wall. Pietists often changed the orientation of the church. The Moravians often used the north wall. The Harmonists did not seem to favor any one direction but in this case they used the south. If you are privileged to enter the church you will find it conveniently arranged for a Lutheran service. The altar is at the east end, but the Harmonists would have had a small platform at the south side with a reading stand on it. This reading stand is still in our collection. The pews would have faced toward the center.

The pews or benches are original and the interior decoration is pretty much the way the Harmonists left it. The only changes the present congregation has made are the extension of the choir loft for the organ and the addition of the stained glass windows and such furniture as is necessary for its worship. The church building is owned by St. John's Lutheran Church, whose proud boast is that it has the only building at Economy which has a record of continuous occupation and which is still used for its original purpose

THE HARMONIST SCHOOLHOUSE

Although the Harmonists were celibate there were always some children at Economy and there were provisions made for their education. The children's schoolhouse still stands at 1500 Church Street. It was originally the home of Ephraim Blain and stood near Big Sewickley Creek. The Harmonists purchased it in 1824 and moved it to its present site for a home for George Rapp, who lived in it until the following year. It became the first school in Ambridge. The building no longer has the outward appearance that it had originally, but it is essentially unchanged. This building and the first church building were the first erected in Ambridge.

GEORGE RAPP'S FIRST HOUSE

The Blain house was regarded as temporary quarters for George Rapp because a large dwelling was being erected for him, which he occupied early in 1825. This building is standing at 274 14th Street. The Marquis de Lafayette visited this house when he came to Economy and may have had dinner here. In 1826 another visitor described the house as being well furnished, with Philadelphia wallpaper on the walls. Rapp must have moved into the Great House about 1826.

THE CEMETERY

At the corner of Church and 11th streets is the cemetery of the Harmony Society. Although nearly 600 of its members are buried in this ground, there are only a few headstones and these are for non-members. The Harmonists never explained their reasons for not marking graves, but it probably had something to do with their belief in the millennium. The grave was meant to be a temporary home—so why mark it? The funeral service was simple. The deceased was laid out in his home for a short period of time, then taken to the graveyard and laid in the grave. A short funeral service was held over the coffin and the members sprinkled a few flower petals as a symbol of eternal life. Each, including George Rapp, was buried beside the one who died before him, with the same service and lack of permanent memorial. Later the Society changed this practice, purchased the hearse, and held a small service in the church. This cemetery is maintained by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

OTHER SITES

If you walk on any street between 12th and 16th, you will see many of the Harmonist houses. Among these are such buildings as the cooper's shop at 16th and Church and the doctor's office at 271 14th Street. In Harmony, Pennsylvania, about twenty-five miles away, there are some eleven buildings still standing. The Harmonist Historical and Memorial Association maintains a museum there and something can be seen of the first village of the Harmony Society. In New Harmony, in the state of Indiana, the Workingman's Institute, the Colonial Dames, and the Blaffer Trust all maintain buildings and memorials to the Harmony Society. A few structures remain in several towns in Beaver County.

After dinner we visited the village, which is very regularly arranged, with broad rectangular streets, two parallel to the Ohio and four crossing them. On the 22d of May it will be but two years since the forest was first felled upon which Economy is built; the roots still remaining in the streets are evidences of the short time that has elapsed. It is astonishing what united and regulated human efforts have accomplished in so short a time!

Many families still live in log-houses, but some streets consist almost entirely of neat, well-built houses at proper distances from each other, each house has a garden attached to it. The four-story cotton and woolen factories are of brick; Mr. Rapp's dwelling-house, not yet completed, and a newly-begun warehouse, are also to be of brick. The log-houses stand in the rear of the line which the new houses are to occupy in the street, so that when in time they wish to erect brick buildings, it may be done without incommoding the tenants of the log dwellings. Mr. Rapp's residence speaks rather freely against the equality he preaches to his people, yet without exciting jealousy or becoming a stumbling block. It consists of a principal building two stories high, with two lower wings standing in the same line, and is adorned with beautiful Philadelphia paper. At the back of the house is a piazza and balcony. There is also a garden containing several acres with flowers and vegetables, as well as a vineyard, situated on a terrace-shaped half circle on the hill, ending in a bower. . . . The women of this community have all preserved their Swabian costume, even to their straw hats, and they look very becomingly.

In the cotton and woolen factories, all the machinery is set in motion by a high-pressure engine of seventy horse-power, made in Pittsburgh. The machine pumps the water from a well fifty feet deep, sunk for the purpose. The community possesses some fine sheep, among which are many Merino and Saxon; they purchase wool, however, from the surrounding farmers, who have already begun to raise it to bring to Economy. As soon as the wool is washed, it is picked by the old women of the community who work in the fourth story, whence it is reconveyed by a sort of tunnel into the lower story. The wool is then separated according to its quality into four classes, dyed together in the dye-house near the manufactory, returned to the mill, where it is combed, coarsely spun, and finally wrought into fine yarn by a machine similar to the spinning jenny. As soon as it is spun, it is placed in the loom and wrought into cloth. This is placed in a

* Bernhard, *Travels*, II, 161-163.

steam fulling-mill, so arranged that the steam from the engine is made to answer the purpose of soap and fuller's earth, which is a great saving. The cloth is shorn by means of a cylinder, upon which a strong piece of steel turns. There is a model of this shearing-machine in the patent office at Washington. The woolen goods most in demand in this country are blue middling, grey mixed (principally used for pantaloons), and red and white flannel cloths. The red flannels are in great demand.

The cotton factory is employed in spinning and weaving. The printing of cottons has not been attempted, as the stamps cannot be procured without great expense and difficulty, and the fashions of printed calico are very changeable. The coloured cottons woven here are blue and white, mixed; a stuff of this colour much in demand in Tennessee, is called cassinet, the chain of which is of cotton, and the filling of wool. The spinning machines are of the common kind, each of which has one hundred and fifty spools at work. The first machine, which does the coarse spinning, has been much improved, so as to save a great deal of manual labor. There are also some power-looms here, though not many, neither have they at present but one dressing machine. Many of the machines are made in Pittsburgh; most of them, however, at Economy. As this establishment has been so recently founded, it is natural enough that but few machines should be prepared or in operation. The factories and workshops are warmed during winter by means of pipes connected with the steam-engine. All the workmen, and especially the females, have very healthy complexions and moved me deeply by the warm-hearted friendliness with which they saluted the elder Rapp. I was also much gratified to see vessels containing fresh sweet-smelling flowers standing on all the machines. The neatness which universally reigns here is in every respect worthy of praise.

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There are many books on the Harmony Society. Those listed below are considered the best and yet are available in most large libraries. There is an extensive bibliography published periodically at Old Economy, which is available to scholars and people doing research on the Harmony Society.

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There are quite a number of other works on the market which discuss the Harmony Society, but most are based on the above writers. For that reason they are not mentioned here.



